Examples of LCC Governance / Organizational Structures[i]

Abbreviations:
ALCC – Arctic LCC
CALCC – California LCC
GBLCC – Great Basin LCC
GNLCC - Great Northern LCC
JV – Joint Venture (public-private conservation partnership; typically taxonomically focused)
LCC – Landscape Conservation Cooperative
PICCC – Pacific Island Climate Change Cooperative (=LCC)
PPPLCC - Plains and Prairie Potholes LCC

Regional factors strongly influenced the governance structures and account for much of the differences between LCCs.
These factors are:
1) ecological and social complexity or diversity within the geographic unit,
2) pre-existing region-wide organizations, and
3) current interactions with state governments

The 1st 'generation' of LCCs (i.e., those funded in FY10) have evolved three or four organizational elements or categories [summary here has been adapted from analysis presented by the Udall Foundation Report – level #3 here has been added].

1) **Executive Level [called 'Steering Committee' or 'Coordinating Committee' or 'Executive Council']**
   – holds ultimate decision-making authority
   – There are 5 types of groups generally included on the executive level: Federal agencies, State agencies, Tribes, NGOs, and Industries.
   – some LCCs drew membership from pre-existing coordination entities (region-wide partnerships), others have not.
   – LCCs, with the exception of the GBLCC, have kept criteria for membership fairly fluid and open. The philosophy (based on the JV model) is that only those entities whose goals align with the LCC will remain involved and thus numbers will dwindle over time. CALCC selected members based upon their geographic scope, looking for representatives with a statewide or national focus. The PICCC used a broad open criteria and a "step-wise" selection process to ensure engaged membership (two Membership levels (Member and Associate Member) as well as a Cooperator level -- Member representatives alone have the right to vote on the Steering Committee.)
   – all LCCs considered some process for membership selection. GBLCC developed formal selection criteria in order to keep the size of the executive committee small and more manageable, while ensuring good representation.
   – responsible for a range of activities, including providing broad, strategic guidance, decision making and oversight functions, allocating resources and funding, approving proposals, sharing information among partners, and acting as ambassadors to gain support for the LCCs

2) **Technical and Coordination Level – [also called Advisory Team, Issue/Geographic Focus Groups, Technical Committees, Coordinating Team, Stakeholder Forum]**
   – provide input for Executive Guidance-level decisions. Function of coordinating groups can vary greatly, generally, focus on content issues, not process. They make recommendations

to the executive tier rather than make decisions.. An exception to this model is the GNLCC Advisory Team, which was created to advise the Coordinators.
- – a few LCCs have standing coordinating groups [GNLCC Advisory Team of four-to-five individuals; GBLCC has a standing Stakeholdedr group and Issue-based Working Group with no defined membership limits]; the majority of LCCs do not have standing coordinating or input groups, rather they have empowered the executive level body to create technical or coordinating committees as the need arises.
- – generally composed of staff-level individuals [may be recruited from entities existing partnerships or those represented at the executive level but most are open membership] (e.g. technical committees) are populated by non-executives who do the more time-intensive "leg work."
- – some constitute their Advisory or Input level Team with individuals with regional focus.
- – The PICCC Associate Member "step" are non-voting individuals but are invited to participate in all Steering Committee meetings and in Working Group meetings as appropriate to their area of interest/expertise. With the exception of non-voting status, only their level of interest and commitment will limit the participation of Associate Members in the development of conservation goals and objectives and the formulation and execution of conservation strategies.

3) **Input and Issue-based Level – [also called Stakeholder Forum and (Issue-based) Working Group]**
- – open to all individuals, including the public. For informally created committees, the selection criteria for individuals at the coordinating and input tier will be based on the purpose and need for the group. Some committees specified in the charter often have informal selection criteria, selecting members based on interest and expertise in a particular issue.
- – function of input groups can vary greatly, generally, focus on content issues, not process. They make recommendations to the executive tier rather than make decisions.
- – The PICCC Cooperator "step" - is any person, organization, or agency working with a Member agency/organization in the planning, implementation, monitoring, or evaluation of a specific project or task recognized by the Steering Committee as advancing the goals and objectives of the PICCC.

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4) **Staff (Execute) Level – [min. staffing requires an LCC Coordinator and Science Coordinator]**
- – staff receives direction from the LCC Coordinator and Steering Committee
- – LCC Coordinator play a major role in managing, coordinating, and guiding the LCC, and oversees the Science Coordinator, staff hired or under contract, and additional personnel detailed to the LCC from other agencies (on detail for 1-2 years)
- – works with organizational entities in the Executive, Technical and Coordination, and Input and Issue-based or Working Group levels to carry through the LCC mission and conduct project work.
- – additional staffing needs identified by various LCCs include: GIS analyst, database manager, outreach and communication, and cultural resource specialist

RECOMMENDATIONS

Balancing LCC Size & Diversity
- Develop specific selection criteria for the SC in order to ensure diversity of representation while also guaranteeing a manageable size.
- A large SC (with 30+ members) is manageable only if the number of active participants (those who participate regularly in meetings) stays between 15 and 25 people.
- Inclusivity is vitally important; no organization should feel they do not have a voice at the table. Ultimately, the final composition of the LCC will be determined by what organizations share the mission of the LCC, much like how the JVs were originally very large, but soon only those organizations whose missions overlapped with the JV remained involved.
- Large LCCs need to find a balance between creating and sustaining regional level partnerships and assuring that individual interests and more place-based partnerships are not excluded or overshadowed by the larger entity. The GNLCC is establishing smaller "Eco-Forums" to develop partnerships at smaller, more ecological relevant scales.

Steering Committee Selection Criteria
- Focus more on selecting individuals who are committed to the LCC and hold some influence and/or expertise in their respective organizations, rather than securing balanced representation for its own sake. (PPPLCC, GBLCC)
- Ensure personnel with decision-making power are present on the SC. (

Staff
- Develop a strategic science document to concretely develop the LCC's goals and needs and use this to guide the staff hiring process; in essence, strive to build a team of skills, as opposed to a team of positions.

Pre-existing Partnerships
- Include pre-existing partnerships (such as JVs, regional councils, etc.) early in the planning process and ensure that decision-making is transparent. This helps to defuse the sense that the LCC may be competing with these partnerships. (PPPLCC, GNLCC, CALCC)
 If a collaborative partnership doesn't exist or its structure cannot serve as a nucleus, it will take a significant amount of time to build trust and relationships among partners because these qualities take a while to develop. Without trust and familiarity, the open dialogue necessary to develop shared visions and products will not occur. (PICCC)

Funding
- Funding is a powerful incentive to become involved in the LCC. Communicate that the LCC is a partnership and that the resources it brings to the table will benefit all.

Governance Documents:
- Develop no more than a "bare-bones" charter initially. This will allow the LCC to adapt more easily as it matures, allow future SC members to add their specific expertise to the LCC more easily, and allow for easier agreement on charter principles.

Third-party neutrals:

- Hire and work with a third-party neutral to facilitate meetings. Not all parties my respond well to an agency facilitator and a third-party neutral may be more successful at bringing all parties to the table.

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[i] Source: Thorndike, C., Caves, J., and Nelson, K. "Lessons Learned Report: Governance Structures of Landscape Conservation Cooperatives." Udall Foundation, U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution, 2010. 42 pg.